



March 13, 2015

Status of the State Budget

An Update on the State Budget

The Joint Finance Committee has completed the agency briefings, and now it will begin the process of public hearings. The primary objective of these hearings is to gather information and input from Wisconsinites across the state. I would like to encourage everyone who has an interest or wants to be involved in the budget process to attend one of these.

The JFC public hearings schedule is as follows:

Wednesday, March 18th

Brillion High School, Brillion
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Friday, March 20th

Alverno College, Milwaukee
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Monday, March 23rd

UW-Barron County, Rice Lake
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Thursday, March 26th

Reedsburg High School, Reedsburg
9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.



As your state representative, it is important for me to hear the voices of my constituents. Whether it is an idea you have pertaining to legislation, an opinion you'd like heard on the state budget or perhaps even a question you have about a state agency, I and my office want to be a resource the people of southwest Wisconsin. I'd encourage you to contact me by phone (608.266.7502), [email](#) or [online](#) with any concerns you might have.

Current Legislative Work-Tax Deduction For State Educators

This week I sent out a bill for Co-sponsorship (LRB 1218)-Relating to income tax deduction for educators.

Under current federal law, an eligible educator (teacher, counselor, principal or aide) can claim an income tax deduction up to \$250 paid for educational supplies. Educational supplies that would qualify would be books, software, computer equipment, and other supplementary materials that are purchased and used by an educator in the classroom.

This deduction currently does not exist on the state level. This legislation would adopt the Internal Revenue Code allowing an individual income tax deduction for supplies, and would mirror the federal deduction. Upon passage, this deduction would be available for taxable year 2015, and would be the same amount as the federal deduction.

Many educators pay out of their own pockets for various supplies and learning materials to enhance their classrooms. This would also simplify the filing process for taxpayers to have the same deduction both on the state and federal levels.

What's Happening in Madison...

With the budget on the forefront of the state legislature and several other initiatives under way, the state capitol continues to be a busy place. However, it's always refreshing to visit with constituents and meet with folks from the district when they visit Madison.

Recently I had the opportunity to visit with [UW-Platteville](#) Chancellor, Dennis Shields; to discuss the State Budget, as well as the current events at the University.

I was glad to have met with several other groups recently, including a couple different Farm Bureaus. Lafayette County Farm Bureau members, Iowa County Farm Bureau members and College Agriculture students. I was able to sit down with both groups to discuss the State Budget and various Agriculture policy issues. Thanks for visiting!

If you ever find yourself in Madison or your group plans to visit the State Capitol, I hope that you can stop by my office, 304 North. It is a beautiful facility full of history. I'd definitely encourage you to take a tour someday - Now that Winter is coming to a close, the Capitol and surrounding area would make a great day trip for the family.



Visiting with members of Layfayette County Farm Bureau. (Listed R to L, Katie Reichling, Christine Benson, Rep. Novak, Rick Althaus, TJ Roth)



Visiting with members from Iowa County Farm Bureau, and the College Agriculture students.



Chancellor Dennis Shields, of University of Wisconsin Platteville stopped in for a visit.

Sincerely,



As always, if you have any comments or thoughts regarding the subject of this E-Update, please feel free to contact me.

If you would like to be removed from future mailings, [email me](#) and ask to unsubscribe.

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